

**In the Claims:**

Claims 1-40 were previously pending.

Claims 20, 21 and 31 are amended.

Claims 41-50 are added.

Claims 1-50 are pending.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Previously presented) A method of controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the method comprising:

setting a plurality of memory thresholds; and

the operating system yielding, at increasingly critical memory thresholds, correspondingly increasing control over said one or more application programs to reduce memory usage.

2. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the yielding increasing operating system control comprises:

at a less critical memory threshold, communicating a request to at least one of the application programs for the at least one application program to limit its use of memory; and

at a more critical memory threshold, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution.

3. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the  
wielding increasing operating system control comprises:

prompting a user to select at least one of the application programs and then  
the operating system requesting that the at least one selected application program  
close itself.

4. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the  
wielding increasing operating system control comprises:

prompting a user to select at least one of the application programs and then  
terminating it without allowing its further execution.

5. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the  
wielding increasing operating system control comprises:

at a first memory threshold, requesting at least one of the application  
programs to limit its use of memory;

at a second memory threshold, requesting at least one of the application  
programs to close itself; and

at a third memory threshold, terminating at least one of the application  
programs without allowing its further execution.

6. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the  
wielding increasing operating system control comprises:

at a first memory threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory;

at a second memory threshold, prompting a user to select at least one of the application programs and then requesting it to close itself; and

at a third memory threshold, prompting the user to select at least one of the application programs and then terminating it without allowing its further execution.

7. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

at one or more of the memory thresholds, reclaiming unused stack memory.

8. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

at one or more of the memory thresholds, discarding read-only memory.

9. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 1.

10. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium having instructions for controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the instructions being executable by the computer system to perform acts comprising:

at a first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself; and

at a second memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first memory usage threshold, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution.

11. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 10, the instructions being executable to perform additional acts comprising:

before performing the requesting step, prompting a user to select one of the application programs to be closed; and

before performing the terminating step, prompting the user to select one of the application programs to be terminated.

12. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 10, the instructions being executable to perform additional acts comprising:

before performing the requesting step, requiring a user to select one of the application programs to be closed; and

before performing the terminating step, requiring the user to select one of the application programs to be terminated.

13. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 10, the instructions being executable to perform an additional act comprising:

at a further memory threshold that is less critical than the first and second memory usage thresholds, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory.

14. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 10, the instructions being executable to perform an additional act comprising:

reclaiming unused stack memory before requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself and before terminating at least one of the application programs.

15. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 10, the instructions being executable to perform an additional act comprising:

discarding read-only memory before requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself and before terminating at least one of the application programs.

16. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 10, the instructions being executable to perform additional acts comprising:

reclaiming unused stack memory and discarding read-only memory before requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself and before terminating at least one of the application programs.

17. (Previously presented) A method of controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the method comprising:

at a first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory;

at a second memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself;

at a third memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first and second memory usage thresholds, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution; and

reclaiming unused stack memory and discarding read-only memory before requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself and before terminating at least one of the application programs.

18. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the reclaiming and discarding are performed at further memory usage thresholds that are set in relation to the second and third memory usage thresholds.

19. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the reclaiming and discarding are performed at further memory usage thresholds that are set in relation to the first, second, and third memory usage thresholds.

20. (Currently amended) ~~A method as recited in claim 17~~  
~~A method of controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the method comprising:~~  
~~at a first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory;~~  
~~at a second memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself;~~  
~~at a third memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first and second memory usage thresholds, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution and~~  
~~reclaiming unused stack memory and discarding read-only memory before requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself and before terminating at least one of the application programs, further comprising:~~  
~~before performing the requesting that at least one of the application programs close itself, prompting a user to select one of the application programs to be closed; and~~  
~~before performing the terminating, prompting the user to select one of the application programs to be terminated.~~

21. (Currently amended) ~~A method as recited in claim 17, further comprising:~~

~~A method of controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the method comprising:~~

~~at a first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory;~~

~~at a second memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself;~~

~~at a third memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first and second memory usage thresholds, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution; and~~

~~reclaiming unused stack memory and discarding read-only memory before requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself and before terminating at least one of the application programs~~

~~before performing the requesting that at least one of the application programs close itself, requiring a user to select one of the application programs to be closed; and~~

~~before performing the terminating, requiring the user to select one of the application programs to be terminated.~~

22. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 17.

23. (Previously presented) A computer system comprising:

- a processor;
- an operating system that is executable by the processor and that utilizes the physical memory;
- a virtual memory system that includes physical memory but does not include secondary storage;
- one or more application programs that utilize the virtual memory system;
- wherein the operating system is configured to perform the following acts:
  - monitoring physical memory usage; and
  - at increasingly critical physical memory usage thresholds, wielding increasing control over said one or more application programs to reduce physical memory usage.

24. (Previously presented) A computer system as recited in claim 23, wherein the act of wielding increasing control comprises the following acts:

- at a less critical memory threshold, communicating a request to at least one of the application programs for the at least one application program to limit its use of memory; and
- at a more critical memory threshold, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution.

25. (Previously presented) A computer system as recited in claim 23, wherein the act of wielding increasing control comprises the following act:

prompting a user to select at least one of the application programs and then the operating system requesting that the at least one selected application program close itself.

26. (Previously presented) A computer system as recited in claim 23, wherein the act of wielding increasing control comprises the following act:

prompting a user to select at least one of the application programs and then terminating it without allowing its further execution.

27. (Previously presented) A computer system as recited in claim 23, wherein the act of wielding increasing control comprises the following acts :

at a first memory threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory;

at a second memory threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself; and

at a third memory threshold, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution.

28. (Previously presented) A computer system as recited in claim 23, wherein the act of wielding increasing control comprises the following acts:

at a first memory threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory;

at a second memory threshold, prompting a user to select at least one of the application programs and then requesting it to close itself; and

at a third memory threshold, prompting the user to select at least one of the application programs and then terminating it without allowing its further execution.

29. (Previously presented) A computer system as recited in claim 23, wherein the operating system is further configured to perform the following additional act:

at one or more of the memory thresholds, reclaiming unused stack memory.

30. (Previously presented) A computer system as recited in claim 23, wherein the operating system is further configured to perform the following additional act:

at one or more of the memory thresholds, discarding read-only memory.

31. (Currently amended) ~~A computer system as recited in claim 23~~  
A computer system comprising:  
a processor;  
an operating system that is executable by the processor and that utilizes the  
physical memory;  
a virtual memory system that includes physical memory but does not  
include secondary storage;  
one or more application programs that utilize the virtual memory system;

wherein the operating system is configured to perform the following acts:

monitoring physical memory usage; and

at increasingly critical physical memory usage thresholds, wield  
increasing control over said one or more application programs to reduce physical  
memory usage, wherein the act of wielding increasing control comprises the  
following acts:

at a first memory threshold, requesting at least one of the application  
programs to limit its use of memory;

at a second memory threshold, prompting a user to select at least one of the  
application programs and then requesting that the at least one selected application  
program close itself;

at a third memory threshold, prompting the user to select at least one of the  
application programs and then terminating it without allowing its further  
execution; and

before prompting the user at the second memory threshold, reclaiming  
unused stack memory and discarding read-only memory.

32. (Previously presented) A method of controlling memory usage in a  
computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more  
application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the method  
comprising:

monitoring memory usage; and

when memory usage is high, sending a message from the operating system to at least one of the application programs requesting the application program to reduce its current use of memory.

33. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 32, further comprising sending the message to the application program when memory usage reaches a defined threshold.

34. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the application programs have respective message loops, the method further comprising sending the message to the application program through its message loop.

35. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the application programs have respective message loops, the method further comprising sending the message to a particular application program that was least recently active.

36. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 32.

37. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium having instructions for controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in

conjunction with an operating system, the instructions being executable by the computer system to perform acts comprising:

monitoring memory usage; and  
at a defined memory usage threshold, sending a message from the operating system to at least one of the application programs requesting the application program to reduce its current use of memory.

38. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 37, wherein the application programs have respective message loops, the instructions being executable to perform a further act of sending the message to the application program through its message loop.

39. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 37, wherein the application programs have respective message loops, the instructions being executable to perform a further act of sending the message to a particular application program that was least recently active.

40. (Previously presented) An application program that resides in a computer-readable memory for execution by a processor in conjunction with an operating system, the application program having a message loop that receives messages from an operating system, the application program being responsive to a particular message received through its message loop to reduce its current use of memory.

**New Claims:**

41. (New) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions embodied therein, that, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to execute a process for controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the instructions being configured to cause the processor to:

set a plurality of memory thresholds; and

increase control over the one or more application programs by the operating system to reduce memory usage at increasingly critical memory thresholds, the instructions configured to cause the processor to increase control including instructions to cause the processor to request at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory at a first memory threshold.

42. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 41, wherein the instructions configured to cause the processor to increase control further comprise instructions configured to cause the processor to:

communicate a request to at least one of the application programs for the at least one application program to limit its use of memory at a less critical memory threshold; and

terminate at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution at a more critical memory threshold.

43. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 41, wherein the instructions configured to cause the processor to increase control further comprise instructions configured to cause the processor to prompt a user to select at least one of the application programs and then cause the operating system to request that the at least one selected application program close itself.

44. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 41, wherein the instructions configured to cause the processor to increase control further comprise instructions configured to cause the processor to prompt a user to select at least one of the application programs and then terminate it without allowing its further execution.

45. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 41, wherein the instructions configured to cause the processor to increase control further comprise instructions configured to cause the processor to:

request at least one of the application programs to close itself at a second memory threshold; and

terminate at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution at a third memory threshold.

46. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 41, wherein the instructions configured to cause the processor to increase control further comprise instructions configured to cause the processor to:

prompt a user to select at least one of the application programs and then requesting it to close itself at a second memory threshold; and

prompt the user to select at least one of the application programs and then terminating it without allowing its further execution at a third memory threshold.

47. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 41, further comprising instructions configured to cause the processor to reclaim unused stack memory at one or more of the memory thresholds.

48. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 41, further comprising instructions configured to cause the processor to discard read-only memory at one or more of the memory thresholds.

49. (New) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a process for controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the process comprising:

at a first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to limit its use of memory;

at a second memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first memory usage threshold, requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself;

at a third memory usage threshold that is more critical than the first and second memory usage thresholds, terminating at least one of the application programs without allowing its further execution, and, before performing the terminating, prompting the user to select a currently executing application program to be terminated; and

reclaiming unused stack memory and discarding read-only memory before requesting at least one of the application programs to close itself and before terminating at least one of the application programs.

50. (New) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a process for controlling memory usage in a computer system having limited physical memory, wherein one or more application programs execute in conjunction with an operating system, the process comprising:

monitoring memory usage; and

when memory usage is high, sending a message from the operating system to at least one of the application programs including a particular application program that was least recently active, requesting the application program to reduce its current use of memory.